

MISS LENA ASHWELL IS HERE

ENGLISH EMOTIONAL ACTING IN "THE SHULAMITE."

An Able and Restrained Performance, but Lacking the Larger Sweep of Power—A Gloomy Role Play, Simply and Solidly but Rather Crudely Written.

Ever since Miss Lena Ashwell electrified London in "Mrs. Dane's Defense" she has been recognized as the leading emotional actress in England, allowing of course that Mrs. Campbell belongs in a different category. "The Shulamite," in which she appeared last night at the Lyric, though a dramatized novel, is conceded to have been the one English play of last year of strong dramatic fibre.

Those who expected much last night, however, were measurably disappointed. The play, which tells the story of a Boer wife under the old regime before the war who is in love with an Englishman, is solidly conceived in its main characters and situations, and is simply written; but it lacks dramatic skill in the writing and technical mastery in the construction. Miss Ashwell's performance was able and restrained throughout, and had moments of intimate charm as well as moments of tense emotion. But—possibly because of the crudeness of her medium—it lacked the larger sweep of power which was expected and which Miss Ashwell achieved as Mrs. Dane.

The strongest impression of the evening in point of fact was made by Mr. Edward R. Mawson in the part of the patriarchal Boer husband who based his life on the Scriptures, and who in the end spoiled his wife. Whether the character was overdrawn may be disputed; but it gave the impression of a solidly conceived character study with vivid light and shade. Mr. Mawson rendered it with uncommon simplicity, presence and power.

On the occasion of the first American performance of the play in Chicago, it will be remembered, the central situation, which turns upon Deborah's false assertion that she is to bear a child to her childless patriarchal husband, caused ribald laughter in an audience composed largely of men and women who had been celebrating the famous victory of White Sox over Cubs. There were hushed titters and giggles last night, but the simplicity and singleness of the treatment carried the day. The situation was, in fact, as strikingly interesting as it was fresh and genuine.

Om Simon has the Moslem habit of enforcing obedience with the lash, and the Englishman, in love with the young and beautiful Deborah, the Shulamite of Solomon's lyric description—is of a temper to make a lively row if he is ever present at such a scene. With the lash poised above her and her chivalrous lover in the background, Deborah swells the situation by proclaiming that she will have a child. The lie melts the heart of the childless Boer of patriarchal instincts, and upon the promise of a son and heir his stern demand for obedience is changed to doting indulgence.

In the second act the catastrophe deferred falls with redoubtable force. Discovering that his wife has lied and that she and the Englishman are in love, Simon decrees Deborah's death and departs for his rifle. The Englishman returns and in defence of Deborah and himself shoots the husband. The third act brings a happy ending and is as complicated and unconvincing as its predecessors are simple and strong.

It is doubtful whether under any circumstances the play could have any great popular interest. The dominant figure of old Simon is even more gloomily rigid than Sederma's Colonel Schwartz in "The Heart," whom he strikingly resembles. And like Scherzer, he is apparently of an obnoxious type, as may be gathered from the fact that the action is laid in the primitive patriarchal period twenty-five years ago, which preceded the Boer war.

But much might have been done by skillful writing. Unfortunately, however, Claude Askew, who, with Alice Askew, wrote the novel, nor Edward Knoblauch, an American resident in London, was equal to the situation. With the freshness and the promising characters and situations, they lack both the requisite dramatic impetus and the requisite dramatic fire.

Aside from Miss Ashwell and Mr. Mawson, the cast was weak. Mr. John Blair played the English lover with his familiar languor and affectedness. He was over about the stage like a half animated rocking horse and spoke his lines as if he were tired of them.

Maude Granger had the character part of Simon's sister, in whom malignant suspicion as to his murder battles with covetous greed for the gold in his coffers. Her plump and diminutive efforts to convey the towering Miss Ashwell had enough of the breadth and emphasis of the old school to make them quite judicious. Her role was played by George E. Guere, and a Kaffir maid servant by Beryl Mercer. These six people composed the entire cast.

During the performance, Mr. Ashwell was received with a warmth of applause that had the ring of more than mannerly hospitality. An interested management to manipulate the curtain as to force her to a speech, which she obviously wished to escape, and for which she was wholly unprepared. She very charmingly said, "Thank you. That's all I can say," and looked beseechingly into the wing.

News of Plays and Players.

Henry Miller's production of Browning's "Pippa Passes," with Mrs. Le Moyne, will have its first performance at the Lyric Theatre on Friday afternoon, November 9. Evening performances will be on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday afternoons. Mabel Taliaferro will play the role of Pippa and William Beach that of Rebekah. The New Amsterdam Theatre was dark last evening, the stage being given up to a final full dress rehearsal of George Bernard Shaw's drama, "Caesar and Cleopatra," which will receive its first production at that house to-night with Forbes Robertson in the role of Caesar and Gertrude Elliott as Cleopatra.

The new Lincoln Square Theatre will open to-night with "The Love Route," in which Guy Standing has the chief part.

MATHOT ON CABSTAND LAW.

Approves Arrest of Public Driver Who Backed Up to Hotel Belmont.

The continuous row between the hackmen employed by the big hotels and the public cabbies resulted in trouble in front of the Hotel Belmont about 10 o'clock last night, when Alexander McKenna, a Grand Central cabbie, backed his hack into one of the hotel rigs. At the request of the hotel manager McKenna was arrested, and the walking delegate, Leroy Jernier, walked to the Tenderloin station with him. Deputy Police Commissioner Mathot was sitting at the desk beside Sergeant McCarthy when McKenna was arraigned. Jernier butted up to the rail and told the sergeant that he had advised McKenna to do as he did, and declared that all public hackmen had a right to solicit business from a hotel after 10 o'clock.

The hell they have," spoke up the Commissioner. "You know a decision by Justice Bickhoff last week in an instance case was against you. We're certainly very glad to accommodate you by looking up your friend, and will do it every time such a thing occurs."

Lerner gave \$500 cash bail for McKenna's appearance in court.

Chamber Laid Suit Against Mann Falls.

Judge Holt in the United States Circuit Court sustained yesterday the demurrer of William D. Mann to the complaint in the suit for \$50,000 damages brought against him by John Armstrong Chamber and dismissed the suit. The suit was brought on account of an article published in *Town Topics* concerning Chamber's former wife, Amelia Niven, now the Princess Pierre Troubetzkoy.

SPINELLI POISONED PERHAPS.

Tomb Officials Suspicious of Death Supposed to Result From Fear.

There was a persistent rumor in the Criminal Courts Building yesterday to the effect that Antonio Spinelli of Rockaway Beach, who died in the Tomba prison on Saturday, apparently from fear, had in reality committed suicide. Spinelli shot his brother-in-law, Antonio Epollito, on September 24. He was soon to be tried and counsel had been assigned to defend him. The evidence was said to be conclusive and Spinelli had worried much about his trial of late. His sudden death on Saturday was at first attributed to this worry.

A partly eaten pear which was found in Spinelli's cell after his death aroused the suspicion of Dr. Frank McGuire, the prison physician. An investigation showed that Spinelli was taken sick on Friday. He had convulsions and a gripping of the throat. Dr. Brown, the prison druggist, gave him some hot milk.

Dr. Schultz, one of the Coroner's physicians, examined Spinelli's body yesterday and it is said found traces of morphia poisoning. At any rate, the vital organs were sent to the Health Department for a chemical analysis.

The pear found in Spinelli's cell was the last one of a quantity his friends had brought him. They had been examined carefully by the keeper before they were given to Spinelli. Whether or not the unopened part of the pear contained any morphia could not be learned. Neither could it be ascertained whether the poison had been smuggled in to Spinelli in the pear or otherwise.

Warden Flynn denied the whole story. Nevertheless he sent for Commissioner Cogswell, who visited the prison shortly before noon yesterday.

Hyacinthe Ringrose, of 43 Washington Square South, the lawyer who had been assigned to defend Spinelli, said last night that he had no doubt that the prisoner had been poisoned. He said he put no faith whatever in the story that Spinelli died of fright. His client expected to be acquitted, he said, and never expressed fear of a death sentence until about two weeks ago. At that time he began to receive threatening letters advising him to plead guilty and warning him that he had merited death and would never come out of the Tomba alive. He then became afraid that he would be killed in prison. He was confined to his cell and was not allowed to see his acquittal last Thursday and counted on going West when released. But on Friday afternoon, according to the lawyer, he was in a state of highly excited fright, saying that there were people after him and that he never expected to get out of the Tomba alive. Mr. Ringrose visited Spinelli on Saturday but did not see the prisoner as he was reported to be sick in bed, suffering from dyspepsia. He said he thought it would be an advantage to send poison contained in eatables to the prisoner and felt confident that all circumstances, including a threatening letter to himself as counsel, pointed to foul play.

ALBERT H. ROGERS IN BELLEVUE.

Man Says Colonel Sues Him in Sundry Courts for Money He Does Not Own.

Col. Albert H. Rogers, 70 years old, of 283 West Fifty-fourth street, formerly a Deputy Street Cleaning Commissioner of New York and a member of various military organizations, was committed to Bellevue Hospital for an examination as to his sanity by Magistrate Mayo in the West Side police court yesterday afternoon. Thomas J. McCarthy, of 258 West Fifty-fourth street, the complainant, said that Rogers repeatedly had him summoned into various civil courts in the city for money he alleged McCarthy owed him. In each instance the case would be thrown out by the Justice and Rogers would go through the same proceeding in a different court.

"It's rather a pity that this man should institute proceedings against me," said Rogers, to Magistrate Mayo, "but I care for the money he owes me, but we used to be great friends. We used to meet at the home of Horace Greeley, socially. Mrs. Cleveland, Mr. Greeley's sister, used to entertain musical and dramatic celebrities at her house and always invited me to the functions. These gatherings were particularly brilliant, and Mr. McCarthy and I were always together. He went away and became rich. For a time I lived at his house. You have no other option, I take it, Judge, but to send me over to Bellevue for some time."

Sorry, decidedly sorry, my dear sir, but there is no other way out of the matter," said Magistrate Mayo, who has known Rogers for some time.

"Thank you just the same. I am well known and never receive anything but courteous treatment from gentlemen. I am acquainted with almost every one at Bellevue and know that they will receive me courteously."

Rogers was committed in 1900 to the asylum on Ward's Island and afterward removed to the Long Island Home Lunatic Asylum. He was discharged as cured. He appeared before Magistrate Mayo a month ago in the West Side police court, when he declared M. Libien of 904 Eighth avenue owed him \$14.02, change out of a check.

"Your Honor, I need this money at once," he said, "as I have to go to Stamford, Conn., where I expect to put through a real estate deal involving \$350,000. My commission alone is to be \$30,000. I can't come here to-morrow, Judge. I'm going fishing with Gen. Riley and Gen. Roe. My yacht is waiting with steam up now. Can't you go along, Judge?"

The magistrate declined, and Rogers wound up by borrowing a quarter from the court, which he paid the next day.

BOY SHOTS COMPANION.

Young Hayward Was Fooling With Gun When It Went Off—Victim Dead.

OYSTER BAY, L. I., Oct. 29.—Merritt Youngs, 9 years old, was shot accidentally late this afternoon by Gordon Hayward, 11 years old. The Youngs boy died within an hour. The affair took place at the rear of the home of Clarence Youngs, the boy's father, at East Norwich. They had been hunting in the woods and had just reached Youngs's home and were about to part. Even the Hayward boy does not know just what happened. He had the gun and was fooling with it when it went off. The charge tore a hole in Youngs's side and lacerated the right lung. Hayward's father is cashier of the Nassau County Bank at Glen Cove.

ORANGE TO HAVE MUNICIPAL LIGHT PLANT.

ORANGE, N. J., Oct. 29.—The Orange Common Council opened bids to-night for the new municipal electric light and power plant. Some of the bids were above the figure, \$75,000, placed by the engineer, but many were away under, and there is no doubt the plant will be built.

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SPOOK ROBBED MAY PEPPER?

NO HUMAN PORCH CLIMBER DID THE JOB, POLICE SAY.

Took Only Plated Ware—Medium Says He Found Out Whose House He Was Robbing—Knew She Could Find Him.

May Pepper, the medium, lost six silver plated spoons and three forks on Sunday evening from her home at 256 Monroe street, Brooklyn. She says that the job was not the work of spirits, while the police, oddly enough, hold the contrary view. That makes it pretty hard to sift out the truth of the matter, for Mrs. Pepper is well posted on the doings of the spirits, yet the police have a good working knowledge of burglars.

"I'm Mrs. Pepper," smiled a large woman with eggbeaters that were weighted with a gold chain. "About the burglar? Why, yes, certainly! Oh, not at all! Why, it was last night. I had finished services up at my church—why, up on the corner it is; never been there?—and the idea came to me that there was trouble at the house. I said to the directors of the church, 'Don't let me go home to-night unguarded, please.' So a company of the directors came up the block with sister and me. I'll show you Mr. Vanderbilt, he's upstairs now."

"When we got in sight of the house I said, 'Look!'

"The house was blazing from top to bottom—with lights, yes. Every gas jet was turned clear off. 'That can't be our house, sister,' I said. 'I've been here.' 'There has been a young, slim man at the door,' I said. 'He broke in.' Several of the directors followed me. I showed them the mark on the door where the young man worked it open with a penknife. You can work this door open very easily with a penknife if you know how. The lock is real bad."

"I was right to the door and I opened the upper right hand drawer. The half dozen plated tablespoons and the quarter dozen plated forks were gone. He hadn't taken anything from the left hand drawer. Come here. Here's the bander. See what's in it? A ladle, jelly spoons, a pulverized sugar spoon, gravy spoons and two fish servers. Yes! All solid. My yes! Well that young man didn't take a thing out of the upper left hand drawer. Wasn't that a funny young man?"

"No, this wasn't anything supernatural. As I tell you, this was a burglar—a tall, slim young man. My, well, I might know him if I saw him. He'd have him on any way. I'd just have to concentrate on something he's handled. Oh, my! Why, I did just that for a woman in my church a few weeks ago. She brought me a Jimmy wrapped up, and I put it on the desk and concentrated on it. Then I said 'This is a Jimmy that was left in your apartment by a tall, slim, dark young man who lives not many miles away.' And it turned out that her apartment had been robbed by the young man who didn't take a thing out of the upper left hand drawer. Wasn't that a funny young man?"

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"They don't work that way, and I've been at them long enough to know."

"No," said another. "If that was a human burglar why didn't the clear-voiced tell us who 'twas and leave us arrest him. 'Have him arrested, ma'am, we says to her.' But she wouldn't tell us who he was. 'It was just another of those inside jobs,' said a policeman on a nearby beat."

NON-UNION AUTO CABS OUT.

Guards Accompany the Strike Breakers—Several Arrests Made.

The first definite attempt to break the strike of its drivers was made yesterday morning by the New York Transportation Company, which sent out ten electric cabs with strike breakers in charge. Each cab carried a special detective and was trailed by a bicycle policeman, who kept mischief makers away. The ten cabs were sent from the garage at Sixty-sixth street and Second avenue and a crowd of strikers followed.

One of the cabs with Assistant Superintendent O'Halloran of the company as a passenger was crossing Fifth avenue when Frank Kennan, a striker, raised the war cry of "Scab." Mr. O'Halloran had Kennan arrested and later he was fined \$10, the union paying the fine. Several hours afterward Mr. O'Halloran was in another cab driven by a strike breaker, when James J. Traut of 239 West 126th street called out "Scab." He was promptly arrested at the instance of Mr. O'Halloran. Michael O'Grady of 315 West Forty-fifth street was arrested on the charge of throwing stones at one of the cabs.

Fred Lied, one of the strikebreakers, came to grief while returning with one of the electric cabs. Near Sixty-sixth street he saw a trolley cab and tried to avoid it, but the motorman slowed up too late. The electric cab was struck sidewise and rebounded against another vehicle, which threw it against a two horse carriage driven by Samuel Kayton, a liveryman. The carriage and horses were damaged. Kayton insisted that Lied be arrested. Lied was afterward discharged.

Three new men in charge of electric cabs belonging to the company were on a trial spin in the city. One of them, Central Park when a number of strikers gathered and began to throw stones.

The crowd was driven away by Police- men. But Kelly and McLaughlin, who were the drivers were afraid to return to the garage without an escort. Supt. Clark of the company, who was in one of the cabs, asked the police to escort the men, but they could not leave their posts. He then telephoned to the East Sixty-seventh street station. Under the supposition that a riot was under way a number of cabs were sent, but there was nothing for them to do.

At the garages of the company notices were posted stating that the company was for information leading to the arrest and conviction of any person or persons who willfully injured or intimidated any of the cabs or the company or who injured any of its property.

BUDGET NEARLY \$130,000,000.

But Taxes Will Be No Higher, Because Real Estate Is Worth More.

The Board of Estimate will hold a special meeting to-day to adopt the budget for the coming year. Mayor McEllan has been endeavoring to keep the total down to the level of \$125,000,000, which would have meant an increase of about \$9,000,000 over this year's budget, but the demand made by the departmental heads and the Borough Presidents has been so persistent that the likelihood is that when the details of the budget are made known Monday it will be found that the total will reach nearly \$130,000,000. This increase will not add to the tax rate for next year, for the reason that the normal growth of the real estate values of the city will more than meet the larger budget.

KILLED ON ELEVATED ROAD.

Man Threw Himself or Fell in Front of a Third Avenue Train.

A man dressed in a blue serge suit and wearing a black cap walked slowly to the upper end of the downtown Third Avenue elevated platform at V. S. Grand street last night and toppled off in front of a south-bound train as it whizzed past. The motorman, Kelsky Wray of 4515 Third Avenue, had no chance to stop his train before the man was out to pieces.